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To: Joshua Gross <joshua.gross@fgsglobal.com>

Subject: Perspectives on Somaliland from former U.S. Assistant Secretaries of State for African Affairs

Good afternoon,

In advance of the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, I am writing to share commentary from two previous Assistant Secretaries of State for African Affairs on the opportunities and need for greater cooperation between the U.S. and Somaliland.

Former Assistant Secretary Tibor Nagy, who served in the role from 2018-2021, penned an op-ed in the [Lubbock Avalanche-Journal](#) upon his return from Somaliland this past August. He outlined the potential strategic advantages of a stronger U.S. partnership with Somaliland, stating:

"Today, parts of our government want to end the 'One Somalia' policy, with the Pentagon most especially eager to engage further with Somaliland. Given the nation's 500-mile coast along the vital Red Sea – with so much of the world's shipping passing by – plus a new container port being financed with a \$500 Million investment from United Arab Emirates DP-World and Britain's international development agency, it's an ideal locale for possible U.S. military contingencies. The port city, Berbera, also has a new airport with a 3-mile-long runway. This, combined with the nation's peace, stability, and strong pro-U.S. stance, and its anti-Communist Chinese sentiments, make it an ideal U.S. partner."

Former Assistant Secretary Jendayi Frazer, who served in the State Department under President George W. Bush, expressed a similar sentiment during an interview this summer with Ambassador Michelle Gavin of the [Council on Foreign Relations](#). During the interview, she discussed the Bush Administration's consideration of deeper engagement with Somaliland:

"When I really started taking a look at Somaliland, with colleagues in the Bush administration, what was apparent was that they were moving towards greater democracy and security. You had a constitutional referendum that was voted on in 2001, favoring restoring Somaliland's independence, and in 2003, you had the first elected president of Somaliland. You had these democratic elections, you had greater security. In contrast, in Somalia, you had a transitional federal government that could not get itself together as it continued to struggle with continued conflict and clan rivalry. So, the contrast between Somaliland and Somalia, and the desire for the international community, including the United States, to support Somaliland was growing."

We hope this information is helpful as congressional consideration of matters related to Somaliland and the Horn of Africa continues into the new year. Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have any questions.

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